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### Abstract

Despite the high use of social media in graduate recruitment campaigns, research has yet to examine how it compares with websites and videos in influencing job seekers' reactions.

Drawing from recruitment, media richness and source credibility theories, we proposed that the media used to present recruitment material would influence organisational attraction via perceptions of media richness and source credibility. Results of a between-subjects study, with 342 participants holding or working towards a degree, show that when a standardised recruitment message is delivered via Facebook, video, or text based webpage media, there are significant between-media richness and source credibility differences. Furthermore, particular media richness features were positively related to perceptions of source credibility, and source credibility perceptions were positively related to organisational attraction.

Implications for organisations' online recruitment campaigns are discussed.

## Web-based Corporate, Social and Video Recruitment Media: Effects of Media Richness and Source Credibility on Organisational Attraction

Radical changes to organisational recruitment have occurred since the emergence of the Internet and the adoption of electronic Human Resource Management (e-HRM) in the mid-1990s (Cappelli, 2001; Parry & Tyson, 2008). If one investigates The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers 2014-2015 rankings, 100% have a website containing recruitment content; ninety three are present on Facebook, with 58 of the 100 companies having recruitment-focused Facebook pages; ninety two have a YouTube channel, 71 of which include YouTube channels that contain recruitment-focussed videos. We investigate graduate job seekers' reactions to these three web-based media and respond to calls in the literature for more theory-based research of e-recruitment effects (Anderson, 2003; Maurer & Cook, 2011). We adopt the theories and frameworks of media richness (Daft & Lengel, 1986) and source credibility (McCroskey, 1966; Whitehead, 1968) to understand how the media differ on communication features and source credibility, and how this impacts organisational attraction. This outcome is key given the 'war for talent', which has shifted organisations' attention from the selection, to the attraction of new recruits (Lievens, van Dam, & Anderson, 2002). Moreover, organisational attraction is identified as an antecedent to other focal pre-hire outcomes, including pursuit intentions – job seekers' intent to enter into the talent pool, and job choice – whether job seekers choose to accept a genuine job offer (Chapman, Uggerslev, Carroll, Piasentin, & Jones, 2005).

### **Media selection**

Due to their centrality in recruitment campaigns, corporate websites have attracted substantial research attention regarding job seekers' reactions of these and recruitment outcomes (Allen, Biggane, Pitts, Otondo, & Van Scotter, 2013; Cober, Brown, Levy, Cober,

& Keeping, 2003). However, they have not been investigated in relation to novel web-based recruitment channels.

To our knowledge, no peer-reviewed research exists that has incorporated job seekers' perceptions of organisations' social recruitment media. These pertain to information-sharing electronic channels such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Facebook's popularity has resulted in considerable academic interest in a host of areas, including: privacy (Frampton & Child, 2013); co-worker relationships and work attitudes (Chou, Hammond, & Johnson, 2013), and training (Wester, Danforth, & Olle, 2013). However, whilst social media has "*the potential to revolutionize organisational behaviour...and a variety of Human Resource (HR) functions, including recruitment*" (McFarland & Ployhart, 2015, p.1653), research in e-HRM contexts is limited. Rather, it has typically focussed on the use of social media for applicant screening: how job seekers' images are portrayed and conceived via online social profiles, and applicants' perceptions of such practices (Brown & Vaughn, 2011; Stoughton, Thompson, & Meade, 2015). To our knowledge, we are the first to investigate how job seekers conceive organisations' Facebook profiles in particular.

For video media, we are interested in the organisation-created YouTube videos (rather than the overall YouTube channels), where an organisational representative presents recruitment information. As video creation is costly, it is worthy to establish the effectiveness of videos in organisations' online recruitment campaigns. Recruitment videos have only so far been investigated within research on media effects for conveying employee testimonials (Walker, Feild, Giles, Armenakis, & Bernerth, 2009), and on job seekers' perceptions of traditional media on richness and credibility (Allen, Van Scotter, & Otondo, 2004). Thus, we update Allen et al.'s study by comparing contemporary e-recruitment platforms and explore the relationship that these different platforms have on perceptions of media richness, source credibility and organisational attractiveness.

**Recruitment media richness**

The focal proposition of Media Richness Theory (MRT) is that communication outcomes depend on the capabilities of the media channels to fulfil communication requirements (Daft & Lengel, 1986). MRT highlights two influential communication forces: uncertainty, referring to the absence of information, and equivocality, referring to the presence of ambiguous and conflicting interpretations (Daft & Macintosh, 1981). The amount of information is key in dealing with uncertainty, whereas media needs to enable deliberation, clarification, and enactment to reduce ambiguity; this is said to be achievable via facilitating and processing 'rich' information (Daft & Lengel, 1986). Richer media is argued to be more effective than leaner media at conveying information of an equivocal or personal nature (Allen et al., 2004) and is thus necessary during recruitment when organisations need to convey complex information (such as organisational values) and engage with potential new recruits to elicit positive affective responses.

Although typically operationalised as a uni-dimensional construct, MRT proposes four key media richness features: 1) feedback, which enables ambiguities to be solved via bi-directional communication; 2) multiple cues, such as the presence of physical presence, body language, gestures, and tone of voice; 3) language variety, referring to the meaning that can be conveyed via language symbols, such as natural language versus data; and 4) personal focus, pertaining to tailoring the message to the recipient's needs, as well as the emotion conveyed within the message (Daft, Lengel, & Trevino, 1987). Traditionally, face-to-face communication has been deemed the richest medium as it promotes high levels of these features, whilst impersonal written documents are considered leanest as they typically communicate objective information via limited richness features (Daft et al., 1987).

Recruitment media research has thus far provided mixed or partial support for MRT. When comparing face-to-face, video, audio, and textual communication channels, the face-

to-face medium was only ranked highest for two-way communication; rankings for the other features were varied, albeit none were ranked top for the textual medium (Allen et al., 2004). Other research has noted that career fairs, which primarily comprise of face-to-face communication, are rated significantly higher in richness than text-based media: company webpages and electronic bulletin boards (Cable & Yu, 2006). However, media richness was operationalised as uni-dimensional, making it difficult to ascertain exactly how the different media vary. Also in line with MRT, Walker et al. (2009) found that job seekers are more attracted to organisations when presented with a recruitment message via video with audio media, versus a picture with text; although these researchers used media as a proxy for media richness (limiting conclusions that could be drawn specifically linked to media richness). Our study overcomes this limitation by measuring the specific features of richness to acquire a deeper understanding of between-media differences.

Within-media richness differences are also noteworthy, as Cable and Yu (2006) showed differences between websites versus electronic bulletin boards; the former were rated higher in richness than the latter. These differences could be attributable to the fact that richness can be infused into a medium. Websites can be customised with pictures and colour for instance, and can be tailored to meet the requirements/personalities of the job seekers (Dineen, Ash, & Noe, 2002). Thus, from a practical perspective, one can envisage how the traditionally defined 'leanest' media can be enhanced to encompass comparable levels of richness to those formally ranked highly rich. Such results highlight the need to measure and compare richness across the media rather than presuming their relative richness as per MRT. Furthermore, studying the richness of each medium, and the associations between the richness features (of each medium) and job seekers attitudes is important from a recruitment perspective, as one cannot presume that job seekers view an organisation's website, Facebook profile, and video media during pre-hire recruitment phases.

### Media richness differences across recruitment media

When comparing the three media in the present study, there are clear differences in their set-up and communication modes. Thus, we would expect ratings of the four richness features to vary fundamentally between these media. Specifically, Facebook should cater for timely *two-way communication* (Daft et al., 1987; Shin, Pang, & Kim, 2015); job seekers can usually ask questions and acquire feedback in relation to eligibility criteria, their applications, and organisation-hosted career events. Consequently, the media richness feature of *personal focus* (Daft et al., 1987) is heightened with Facebook as organisational representatives use this bi-directional communication feature to relay tailored responses. Conversely, videos and websites typically do not cater for timely two-way communication (resulting in a lack of personalised focus). Taken together, we propose the following between-media two-way communication and personal focus differences:

*Hypothesis 1:* Facebook will be perceived to encompass higher levels of two-way communication than: A) YouTube video and B) website.

*Hypothesis 2:* Facebook will be perceived to offer higher levels of personal focus than: A) YouTube video and B) website.

A prominent feature of YouTube recruitment videos is that videos will typically transmit a variety of cues (e.g., body language and vocal tone) beyond the explicit message, thereby encompassing high levels of the *multiple cues* richness feature (Daft et al., 1987). This was demonstrated in Allen et al.'s (2004) work, where the video medium was perceived highest in symbolism (operationalised as “*cues with symbolic meaning that go beyond the information provided to evoke images in the receiver's mind*”, p.154) compared to other communication channels. Additionally, the language in videos may be perceived as natural, comparable to how one would communicate in a face-to-face context, which is not as apparent in static text-based media. Thus, the *language variety* feature of richness (Daft et al.,

1987) is likely greater within video communication than the other media investigated in our study.<sup>1</sup> However, within-media language variety differences may also be present between the two text-based media; Facebook's social basis may result in job seekers perceiving the language as more natural than the website, where content may appear to be conveyed more directly and formally. Therefore, we propose the following between-media multiple cues and language variety differences:

*Hypothesis 3:* YouTube video will be perceived to encompass higher levels of multiple cues than: A) Facebook and B) website.

*Hypothesis 4:* YouTube video will be perceived to encompass higher levels of language variety than: A) Facebook and B) website, and C) Facebook will be perceived to encompass higher levels of language variety than the website.

### **Recruitment media source credibility**

A key argument we present in the current paper is that the three recruitment media we focus on will vary in media richness. Given the different nature of these media, we would also expect these media to differ in connection with another dimension, that of perceived source credibility. Credibility has been defined as “*a person's perception of the truth of a piece of information*” (Eisend, 2004, p.352), or “*the believability of a medium based on the information source*” (Cable & Yu, 2006, p.829). The ‘source credibility framework’, proposes that consumers are more likely to be persuaded by a message when they believe the source is highly credible (Eisend, 2004; Pornpitakpan, 2004). Attribution theory (Kelly 1967, as cited in Gotlieb & Sarel, 1991) is pertinent here, suggesting a consumer's decision to accept a message is influenced by their attributions concerning the communicator's involvement in the message. Attributions concerning knowledge bias (the communicator's

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<sup>1</sup> Our review of the Times Top 100 Graduate Employers (2014-2015) revealed that 43% of the recruitment-focussed Facebook profiles include recruitment videos, and only 31% of the graduate webpages include recruitment videos. Thus, we opted to assess the video medium separately to the Facebook and website media (without video integrated).



knowledge of the message's content is not genuine) or reporting bias (the communicator's unwillingness to convey a true representation of reality) will influence the degree to which recipients of the message will be persuaded (Chaiken & Stangor, 1987). Support for this theory comes from studies on the effectiveness of various endorsers in advertising products holding different characteristics, and studies on the perceived credibility of supervisors' versus job incumbents' employee referrals (Breugh & Starke, 2000; Friedman & Friedman, 1979). Considering this, to maintain consistency across the media, we focus specifically on organisational-provided content, excluding alternative sources that have been investigated previously, such as employee testimonials (Van Hoya & Lievens, 2007; Walker et al., 2009) and company-independent sources (i.e., word-of-mouth; Van Hoya, 2012).

Conceptualisations of source credibility vary, including objectivity, competence, and dynamism (Whitehead, 1968), and broader dimensions, such as authoritativeness (encompassing factors such as reliability, intelligence and informativeness) and character (encompassing honesty and virtuousness, McCroskey, 1966). However, three prominently reported dimensions are expertise, trustworthiness, and affect, which we adopt herein. Expertise refers to the competence of the source regarding making correct assertions, whereas trustworthiness refers to the perceived validity of the source (Hovland, Janis, & Kelly, 1953; as cited in Pornpitakpan, 2004). Affect pertains to components of the source-value model (McGuire, 1985), which proposes the effectiveness and impact of a message is attributable to the source's familiarity, likability, similarity, and attractiveness (Ohanian, 1990).

Regarding between-media source credibility differences, Cable and Yu's (2006) study is noteworthy. They found that webpages and career fairs were perceived as being more credible than electronic bulletin boards. These outcomes are surprising; it was expected that electronic bulletin boards would be perceived the most credible, as they are not facilitated by the organisations (which may sanitise recruitment content to market themselves). One

explanation provided by the authors refers to the notion that job seekers may be sceptical about the employees who invest time to submit feedback to such boards, potentially believing they hold motives to cause detriment to the organisation.

We test an alternative explanation; that between-media source credibility differences are inextricably linked to between-media richness differences. In Cable and Yu's (2006) study, the higher levels of richness of the career fairs and websites, versus the electronic bulletin boards could have had an impact on credibility responses, accounting for the between-media differences in credibility. This proposition aligns with research showing a video with audio medium to be perceived higher in credibility than a picture with text medium (Walker et al., 2009).

In the current study, we propose that the social/personable basis of Facebook would positively impact likability perceptions, as organisations are likely to communicate in a polite and positive manner to potential applicants. This corresponds with research showing positive relationships between interactions and liking (e.g., Weisband & Atwater, 1999). Moreover, via Facebook's conversational capability, we expect that job seekers will infer that the source is knowledgeable when other job seekers appear to receive tailored responses to their requests for further information. That is, organisational sources will use this as an opportunity to display their expertise. Lastly, the 'open' nature of Facebook may increase perceptions of source trustworthiness, considering that third parties and current employees could publicly dispute misleading information. Consequently, perceptions of source credibility are likely to be greater for Facebook versus the other media. Therefore, we propose the following between-media source credibility differences:

*Hypothesis 5:* Facebook will be rated higher in source credibility than: A) YouTube video and B) website, and C) YouTube video will be rated higher in source credibility than the website.

Our expectations of between-media source credibility differences are generally based on the notion that media richness features impact dimensions of source credibility; corresponding with theoretical models of recruitment processes (cf. Breaugh & Starke, 2000). Research has provided empirical support that credibility is positively related to two-way communication, personal focus, social presence, and symbolism (Allen et al., 2004). We further propose that amount of information is a positive antecedent of source credibility. From a job seeker's perspective, it is reasonable to expect that they would find it difficult to ascertain how credible content sources are if they do not feel they have received an adequate amount of information. Thus, our next propositions are as follows:

*Hypothesis 6:* Source credibility will be positively related to: A) amount of information, B) language variety, C) multiple cues, D) personal focus, and E) two-way communication.

Whilst we expect the three media to vary in source credibility, we suggest that these differences should result largely from between-media richness differences. Given this, we are proposing that the media will drive different richness features, which in turn will impact source credibility perceptions. Thus, we propose the following mediation relationships:

*Hypothesis 7:* The relationships between the different media and source credibility will be mediated by: A) amount of information, B) language variety, C) multiple cues, D) personal focus, and E) two-way communication.

### **Media richness, source credibility, and pre-hire recruitment outcomes**

As per the persuasion research discussed, differences in the credibility of recruitment sources are shown to explain the effects of sources on applicants' attitudes and behaviours (Fisher, Ilgen & Hoyer, 1979). If job seekers do not feel the source of the content is trustworthy, knowledgeable and likeable; this should impact (detrimentally) their affective responses towards the organisation. Signaling theory (Rynes, 1991; Spence, 1973) suggests

that potential new recruits will interpret available information as signals of wider organisational attributes. Thus, if they perceive the recruitment source as being credible, they are likely to consider the source to have some positive and desirable characteristics; furthermore, this could signal that other members of the organisation will also hold these credibility characteristics. As these qualities are expected to be attractive, it is likely this will heighten applicants' positive feelings towards the organisation overall. Thus, we propose:

*Hypothesis 8:* Organisational attraction will be positively related to source credibility.

As mentioned, rich media is said to be effective at conveying information of an equivocal form as richer media is said to help clarify ambiguities and also create a more positive affective state in the recipient; these together can influence information accessibility, attitudes, and decision-making (Allen et al., 2004). Research has shown direct positive relationships linking media richness features with organisational attraction (Allen et al., 2013). The previously cited conceptual model of recruitment processes suggests these relationships can be explained by source credibility serving as a mechanism linking recruitment activities and outcomes (Breaugh & Starke, 2000). This aligns with the propositions made in earlier literature regarding the presentation of realistic job previews via a face-to-face versus a written medium; face-to-face should be more effective (in terms of job acceptance, for instance) by enhancing job seekers' perceptions of source credibility, and consequently the importance they attach to the information they receive (Colarelli, 1984).

Such propositions led to an empirical test of credibility as a mediator in this regard. Allen et al.'s (2004) research showed that credibility mediated the relationships between amount of information, two-way communication, social presence, and symbolism with affective organisational attitudes. Interestingly, in Allen et al.'s (2004) study, this mediation did not hold for the relationship between personal focus and affective attitudes towards the organisation, although a direct personal focus-attitude relationship was significant. We re-test

these mediating relationships, although we operationalise source credibility to cover the perceived trust, expertise, and liking of the source. This is fundamentally different to Allen et al.'s (2004) research as their measure of credibility focussed primarily on perceptions of general message credibility; we therefore contribute to the literature by focussing on key attributes of the message source, which has yet to be examined in this context. Based on the previously discussed signaling theory, we expect all of the media richness features will be positively related to organisational attraction via source credibility. This includes the personalised focus feature, which is expected to induce greater source liking, expertise and trust. Thus, our final hypotheses are as follows:

*Hypothesis 9:* A) Amount of information, B) language variety, C) multiple cues, D) personal focus, and E) two-way communication will have an indirect effect on organisational attraction via source credibility.

## **Method**

### **Sample**

The survey was open to graduates and students working towards a degree.<sup>2</sup> Participants were recruited via a number of online social media platforms and via Management and Psychology university mailing lists (undergraduate and postgraduate) at two London-based universities. A total of 342 participants (64% female) completed the study; this took approximately 10 minutes and all participants were given the opportunity to enter into a £200 prize draw. An additional seven respondents took part, albeit responded to less than 40% of the questions and were, therefore, excluded. Just over a quarter of the sample (25.7%) were recent graduates: 43.2% had graduated from an undergraduate degree, and 56.8% had graduated from a postgraduate degree. Three quarters (74.3%) were current

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<sup>2</sup> Students working towards a degree are an appropriate sample as it is likely that many students will start investigating organisations (and even apply for a conditional placement on a graduate scheme) before they have obtained their degree qualification. Thus, they will be utilising organisations' graduate recruitment media and content whilst also studying.

students (39% of whom were final year undergraduates; 31.5% were second year undergraduates; 18.1% were first year undergraduates; 11.4% were taught postgraduate students). The majority of the overall sample (36.5%) were studying, or had graduated with, a degree in Business/Management, followed by 22.5% who were studying or had graduated with a degree in Psychology. A series of t-tests and ANOVAs were computed to examine differences between the following subgroups on each of the study variables: males versus females; students (undergraduate and postgraduate) versus graduates; undergraduate students, versus postgraduate students, versus graduates; undergraduate students versus postgraduate students and graduates. Furthermore, we tested for differences across the subgroups with regards to degree subject; we tested for differences between the two most popular subjects (Business/Management and Psychology), and compared these two subjects against an 'Other' category, whereby we grouped students/graduates from additional subjects into one group. No significant differences emerged from these analyses, highlighting similarities in the study variables across all subgroups.

### **Design and Procedure**

The study presented a recruitment message via three media: Facebook, YouTube video, and website. Importantly, the recruitment message content was standardised across the three media, as were the company name and logo; this was to ensure that any differences identified between the media on media richness and source credibility dimensions were attributable to the media itself and not to differences in content. The message was presented in relation to a fictitious organisation, 'LCK Inc.'; this prevented confounding factors such as organisational familiarity and prestige. The 'LCK Inc.' recruitment message contained information that one would typically find within 'graduate recruitment' pages of graduate recruiters' online recruitment media; for instance, providing information on opportunities for graduates who join the organisation, and details of the organisation's culture/values. The

recruitment message was not focussed on recruiting graduates for a specific role/job; it was made clear within the recruitment message that applicants from all subject backgrounds and locations were welcome. Thus, the premise was to study attraction to the overall organisation as opposed to a particular job post.

To ensure that participants viewed consistent content, the Facebook and website media were presented as screen-shots within the online survey, rather than linking participants to live online media. These were created by print-screening true organisations' Facebook/website pages and substituting the content/imagery with the 'LCK Inc.' content/branding using Adobe Photoshop Elements 11. Similarly, the YouTube video was embedded into the survey, rather than linking participants to a live YouTube channel. As discussed, we were primarily interested in the form of recruitment video where an organisational representative conveys the core recruitment message to the camera. A contact of the research team was recruited for this role, selected on the basis of characteristics that are often held by presenters in the Times Top 100 Graduate Employers recruitment videos: white, middle-class, male. The video (lasted three minutes, 26 seconds) was filmed in an office, typical of the location that true organisations' recruitment videos are filmed in. The company name/branding was clearly visible throughout, including at the end of the video where a series of textual FAQ slides were added (see below).

As mentioned, Facebook typically differs to the other two media in terms of offering bi-directional communication. This was demonstrated with a screen-shot of the Facebook 'wall' feature, depicting conversations between job seekers and organisational representatives. To ensure this content was included within the website and YouTube video media, we presented these questions and answers as 'Frequently Asked Questions' (FAQs); this is representative of the form of content one would see on these platforms. For the video, these FAQs were shown using text-slides at the end of the verbal/visual presentation.

Importantly, the wording of the questions and answers were identical for the website and video media. For Facebook, there were very slight variations; as this is a social channel with questions being asked by job seekers, to make the screen shots more realistic, it was necessary to present the questions coming from fictitious students/graduates. This entailed adding some ‘users’ with small profile pictures and names. As it is not typical to witness job seekers and organisational representatives communicating with one another in a direct manner without acknowledgements (i.e., ‘Hello’, ‘Hi there’), some of these were added to the start of a sample of the messages on the Facebook ‘wall’. These additions were only expected to change the nature of the Facebook message in a way that was desirable for the study’s design; that is, to reiterate to the participants that this medium enables users to engage in two-way communication.

One often finds that job seekers will ask multiple questions within a single ‘post’, to ensure they acquire all the information they need at speed. We depicted this in our screen-shot of the Facebook ‘wall’. For the two other platforms, it was more realistic to split this into separate questions and answers, to portray an accurate representation of these media in real settings. For instance, a Facebook question asked, “*Hi, Do you accept applications from graduates overseas? If so, how do we apply?*”. This was presented via two questions on the other two media: “*How do I apply for a position with LCK Inc.?*” and “*Do you accept applications from graduates overseas?*” The answer to the Facebook question was, “*Hi, Applications are open to all graduates who meet our entry requirements, regardless of location, and the application process is the same for everyone. You would need to apply online*”. The answers to the two questions on the other two media were: “*All applications must be submitted online*” and “*Applications are open to all graduates who meet our entry requirements, regardless of location*”. Thus, despite these few very small variations in



presentation, the core recruitment information and content provided to participants across the three media within these questions and answers was the same/largely standardised.

A between-participants design was adopted where participants were randomly assigned to viewing only one of the three forms of media. Thereafter, they were asked to rate the medium on the five communication features, followed by the credibility of the source, and then the organisation in terms of attraction.

## Measures

**Media Richness.** An eight-item measure of media richness (Webster & Trevino, 1995) was adopted for the present study. Two items pertain to each of the four media richness features: two-way communication, personal focus, multiple cues, and language variety. Whilst prior research has utilised this as a uni-dimensional scale, we investigated whether media richness is better measured in terms of its features. This scale was initially extended to 18 items based on definitions of the features provided in the theoretical literature; however, four items were dropped due to inadequate psychometric properties (see below). Each item had a five-point (1-“not at all” to 5-“a great extent”) Likert-based response scale. The questions were headed: *“To what extent would you characterise the medium you have just viewed as having the ability to:”*. Six items measured two-way communication, four measured personal focus, four measured multiple cues and four measured language variety.

**Amount of Information.** A two-item scale, based on Allen et al. (2004) was used to examine perceptions of the amount of information conveyed by the recruitment medium. Each item had a seven-point (1- “strongly disagree” to 7-“ strongly agree”) Likert-based response scale.

**Source Credibility.** A seven-item scale based on Fisher et al. (1979) was used to measure source credibility. Three items measured perceived expertise of the source, two items measured the perceived trustworthiness of the source, and two items the perceived

liking of the source. In Fisher et al.'s (1979) work, the researchers separated items into sub-components but did not test whether the scales were distinct constructs. Psychometric testing on the scales in the present study revealed that all seven items loaded onto a single factor (see below); thus we measured source credibility as a uni-dimensional construct. Each item was rated on a seven-point (1- "strongly disagree" to 7- "strongly agree") Likert-based response scale. Participants were clearly asked to consider the person who would have provided them with the information via the medium (which they had viewed) when making these ratings.

**Organisational Attraction.** A five-item scale was used to measure organisational attraction, based on Highhouse, Lievens, and Sinar (2003). Each item was rated on a seven-point (1- "strongly disagree" to 7- "strongly agree") Likert-based response scale.

### **Data Analyses**

The study aims and hypotheses were tested in three steps using SPSS and Mplus7. First, we examined the discriminant validity of the media richness dimensions and other study variables via a series of Confirmatory Factor Analyses. Second, we examined between-media differences via Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) and Univariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Third, we examined the direct and indirect hypotheses via full Structural Equation Models (SEM).

## **Results**

### **Testing Measurement Models**

To test the structural and discriminant validity of the media richness features, we compared a single-factor 18-item conglomerated model ( $\chi^2=1340.75$ ,  $df=135$ ,  $\chi^2/df=9.93$ , RMSEA=0.16, SRMR=0.15, CFI=0.68, TLI=0.64) with a four-factor model that loaded the two-way communication, personal focus, multiple cues, and language variety items onto respective latent factors ( $\chi^2=534.32$ ,  $df=129$ ,  $\chi^2/df=4.14$ , RMSEA=0.10, SRMR=0.08, CFI=0.89, TLI=0.87). Despite the four-factor model showing a significantly better fit than

the single-factor model, some items did not load well. Two of the four multiple cues item loadings were below 0.70 (0.62 and 0.58) onto their latent factor and two of the four language variety items yielded poor factor loadings (0.44 and 0.52). Consequently, these four items were removed and the one-factor and four-factor models were re-tested. The trimmed (non-nested) four-factor model yielded an improved good to acceptable fit ( $\chi^2=243.77$ ,  $df=71$ ,  $\chi^2/df=3.43$ , RMSEA=0.08, SRMR=0.04, CFI=0.95, TLI=0.93), significantly better ( $\Delta\chi^2=567.43$ ,  $p<.05$ ) than the trimmed one-factor measurement model ( $\chi^2=811.20$ ,  $df=77$ ,  $\chi^2/df=10.54$ , RMSEA=0.17, SRMR=0.12, CFI=0.77, TLI=0.73). This four-factor model was also compared against all three-factor and two-factor media richness combinations (see Table 1). For all comparisons, the chi-square difference exceeded 7.81 and 11.07, for a difference of three and five degrees of freedom, respectively ( $p<.05$ ). This suggests that media richness is better examined in terms of its four theorised features.

*[Table 1 about here]*

To test the structural and discriminant validity of the source credibility dimensions, we compared a seven-item single-factor model ( $\chi^2=63.65$ ,  $df=14$ ,  $\chi^2/df=4.55$ , RMSEA=0.10, SRMR=0.03, CFI=0.97, TLI=0.95) against a three-factor model, where the trustworthiness, expertise, and liking items were loaded onto separate factors ( $\chi^2=55.74$ ,  $df=11$ ,  $\chi^2/df=5.07$ , RMSEA=0.11, SRMR=0.03, CFI=0.97, TLI=0.94). The three-factor model outperformed the one-factor model ( $\Delta\chi^2=7.91$ ,  $p<.05$ ). However, the intercorrelations between the three subscales showed very high relationships between the three dimensions, with shared variances ranging from 86% to 96%. Specifically, expertise correlated with liking at  $r=.93$ ; expertise correlated with trust at  $r=.98$ ; liking correlated with trust at  $r=.94$  ( $p<.001$ ). In addition, the Cronbach's alpha value for the one-factor scale ( $\alpha=.91$ ) exceeded those of the separate scales (which ranged from  $\alpha=0.72$  to  $\alpha=0.87$ ). Thus, we opted to utilise source credibility as a uni-dimensional scale.

A 28-item seven-factor (two-way communication, personal focus, multiple cues, language variety, amount of information, source credibility, and organisational attraction) model ( $\chi^2=713.81$ ,  $df=329$ ,  $\chi^2/df=2.17$ , RMSEA=0.06, SRMR=0.04, CFI=0.94, TLI=0.94) was compared with a single-factor model ( $\chi^2=4016.45$ ,  $df=350$ ,  $\chi^2/df=11.48$ , RMSEA=0.18, SRMR=0.17, CFI=0.46, TLI=0.42) and a four-factor model, whereby the media richness items were loaded onto one factor together ( $\chi^2=1337.07$ ,  $df=344$ ,  $\chi^2/df=3.89$ , RMSEA=0.09, SRMR=0.10, CFI=0.85, TLI=0.84). The seven-factor model fit indices were good to acceptable, and the model fit the data significantly better than the single-factor and four-factor models ( $p<.05$ ). All items loaded significantly onto their respective constructs ( $p<.001$ ); these were greater than 0.70, with the exception of one language variety item (0.60) and one organisational attraction item (0.65).

### **Descriptive Results**

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics and correlations for all of the study variables. Source credibility was positively (and significantly) related to each media richness dimension: two-way communication ( $r=.29$ ,  $p<.001$ ), multiple cues ( $r=.27$ ,  $p<.001$ ), language variety ( $r=.32$ ,  $p<.001$ ), and personal focus ( $r=.39$ ,  $p<.001$ ), and also to organisational attraction ( $r=.66$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Organisational attraction was positively (significantly) related to each media richness dimension: two-way communication ( $r=.25$ ,  $p<.001$ ), multiple cues ( $r=.26$ ,  $p<.001$ ), language variety ( $r=.29$ ,  $p<.001$ ), and personal focus ( $r=.33$ ,  $p<.001$ ).

[Table 2 about here]

### **Testing Between-Media Differences**

Hypotheses 1-5 were tested using a MANOVA: testing the effects of the three media on the media richness dimensions, amount of information, and source credibility. There were relatively large between-media differences (Pillai's Trace=.61, multivariate  $F(12, 670.00)=24.22$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $\eta^2=.30$ ). The ANOVA showed that media had a significant effect on

all six outcomes. The Levene's Test was significant ( $p < .05$ ) for all variables except amount of information, thus a Welch test was used. The media differed significantly on: two-way communication  $F(2, 213.01) = 125.89, p < .001$ ; personal focus  $F(2, 219.03) = 81.09, p < .001$ ; multiple cues  $F(2, 218.53) = 35.55, p < .001$ ; language variety:  $F(2, 212.97) = 3.63, p < .05$ ; amount of information  $F(2, 223.49) = 6.08, p < .01$ ; and source credibility  $F(2, 216.09) = 5.54, p < .01$ . Games-Howell post-hoc comparisons indicated two-way communication was significantly higher for Facebook ( $M = 3.87, SD = .64$ ) than the YouTube video ( $M = 2.36, SD = .90$ ) and website ( $M = 2.76, SD = .87$ ) media ( $p < .001$ ), supportive of Hypotheses 1A and 1B (see Table 3), and significantly higher for the website than the YouTube video ( $p < .001$ ). In line with Hypotheses 2A and 2B, Facebook was significantly higher on personal focus ( $M = 3.84, SD = .70$ ) than the YouTube video ( $M = 2.64, SD = .85$ ) and website ( $M = 2.88, SD = .84$ ) media ( $p < .001$ ). Consistent with Hypotheses 3A and 3B, the YouTube video was significantly higher on multiple cues ( $M = 3.23, SD = 1.15$ ) than the Facebook ( $M = 2.17, SD = .89$ ) and website ( $M = 2.16, SD = .99$ ) media ( $p < .001$ ). Consistent with Hypothesis 4C, language variety was significantly higher for Facebook ( $M = 3.38, SD = .77$ ) than the website ( $M = 3.09, SD = 1.01$ ) media ( $p < .05$ ). Finally, consistent with Hypotheses 5A and 5B, ratings of source credibility were significantly higher for Facebook ( $M = 4.54, SD = .91$ ) than the YouTube video ( $M = 4.17, SD = 1.20$ ) ( $p < .05$ ) and the website ( $M = 4.12, SD = 1.15$ ) media ( $p < .01$ ). Whilst no between-media hypotheses were made regarding judgments of the amount of information shown (as the content was largely standardised across the media), mean scores were significantly higher for the YouTube video ( $M = 4.99, SD = 1.33$ ) than the website ( $M = 4.37, SD = 1.39$ ) medium ( $p < .001$ ), and significantly higher for Facebook ( $M = 4.81, SD = 1.30$ ) than the website medium ( $p < .05$ ).

[Table 3 about here]

### Tests of Mediation Hypotheses

Three full-SEM models were examined to test our main mediation hypotheses. First, we tested a full-mediation model. This model showed acceptable fit to the data ( $\chi^2=796.81$ ,  $df=380$ ,  $\chi^2/df=2.10$ , RMSEA=0.057, SRMR=0.044, CFI=0.941, TLI=0.933, AIC=26468.77). This was compared with a direct-effects model that only included direct paths between the media and organisational attraction. The direct effects model showed a poorer fit on all indices ( $\chi^2=1425.48$ ,  $df=394$ ,  $\chi^2/df=3.62$ , RMSEA=0.087, SRMR=0.221, CFI=0.854, TLI=0.839, AIC=27069.44), and neither medium (with website as a reference category) was found to be significantly associated with organisational attraction directly.

We then compared the full-mediation model, to a partial-mediation model, which included direct media-source credibility, media-attraction, and media richness-attraction pathways (Figure 1, non-significant paths removed for parsimony). This model showed acceptable fit to the data ( $\chi^2=779.15$ ,  $df=371$ ,  $\chi^2/df=2.10$ , RMSEA=0.057, SRMR=0.040, CFI=0.942, TLI=0.932, AIC=26469.11), and outperformed the hypothesised model ( $\Delta\chi^2=17.66$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Therefore, the partial-mediation model was retained.

*[Figure 1 about here]*

Compared with the website medium, YouTube was perceived significantly lower on source credibility ( $\beta=-0.21$ ,  $p<.01$ ), two-way communication ( $\beta=-0.19$ ,  $p<.01$ ), and personal focus ( $\beta=-0.13$ ,  $p<.05$ ), and significantly higher on multiple cues ( $\beta=0.49$ ,  $p<.001$ ), language variety ( $\beta=0.21$ ,  $p<.01$ ), and amount of information ( $\beta=0.23$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Facebook was perceived significantly higher than the website medium on two-way communication ( $\beta=0.54$ ,  $p<.001$ ), personal focus ( $\beta=0.51$ ,  $p<.001$ ), language variety ( $\beta=0.17$ ,  $p<.05$ ), and amount of information ( $\beta=0.17$ ,  $p<.05$ ).

Source credibility was significantly positively associated with amount of information ( $\beta=0.48$ ,  $p<.001$ ), multiple cues ( $\beta=0.27$ ,  $p<.05$ ), and personal focus ( $\beta=0.48$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Thus,

Hypotheses 6A, 6C, and 6D were supported. In line with Hypotheses 7A, 7C and 7D, Facebook was significantly associated with source credibility via amount of information (indirect effect,  $\beta=0.08$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and personal focus (indirect effect,  $\beta=0.25$ ,  $p<.05$ ), and the YouTube video was significantly associated with source credibility via amount of information (indirect effect,  $\beta=0.11$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and multiple cues (indirect effect,  $\beta=0.13$ ,  $p<.05$ ).

In line with Hypothesis 8, source credibility was significantly positively associated with organisational attraction ( $\beta=0.63$ ,  $p<.001$ ). In line with Hypotheses 9A, 9C, and 9D, source credibility mediated the relationship between amount of information and attraction (indirect effect,  $\beta=0.30$ ,  $p<.001$ ), multiple cues and attraction (indirect effect,  $\beta=0.17$ ,  $p<.05$ ), and personal focus and attraction (indirect effect,  $\beta=0.31$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Taken together, when analysing the two mediators in serial (i.e., media  $\rightarrow$  media richness  $\rightarrow$  source credibility  $\rightarrow$  attraction model), significant indirect effects were found between Facebook and organisational attraction via amount of information and source credibility ( $\beta=0.05$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and via personal focus and source credibility ( $\beta=0.17$ ,  $p=.05$ ). In addition, significant indirect effects were found between the YouTube video and organisational attraction via multiple cues and source credibility ( $\beta=0.08$ ,  $p<.05$ ), and via amount of information and source credibility ( $\beta=0.07$ ,  $p<.01$ ).

## **Discussion**

### **Overview of findings and contributions**

This study contributes to the HRM, organisational psychology, and communications literature. We adopt established theories and frameworks to investigate job seekers' perceptions of commonly utilised web-based recruitment media and how these impact a core pre-hire recruitment outcome, organisational attraction. This includes investigating a key social medium, Facebook, which is very much under-researched in the recruitment field. Furthermore, we highlight the need to operationalise media richness as multi-dimensional,

thus adding clarity to previous findings that have focussed on richness as uni-dimensional, or used media as a proxy for richness (Cable & Yu, 2006; Walker et al., 2009). In addition, our measure of source credibility encapsulates the three focal dimensions of source liking, source trustworthiness, and source expertise; this extends the literature that has primarily focussed on overall message credibility.

Despite holding the recruitment message constant, we identify the three web-based media lead to differences in judgments regarding all of the media richness features, amount of information, and source credibility. In support of MRT and prior research comparing traditional communication channels (Allen et al., 2004; Daft & Lengel, 1986; Daft et al., 1987; Walker et al., 2009) we found the video to be rated significantly higher in multiple cues than the other two media. Contrary to expectations, we did not find the video to be rated higher in language variety; this is surprising given that verbal communication should be perceived as more natural and comparable to face-to-face communication, as per MRT's propositions. However, in line with our hypothesis, we found language variety to be rated significantly higher for Facebook versus the website medium. Given that both media presented textual content, this is an interesting finding. As mentioned previously, our study presented the same questions and answers via a FAQs page on the website screen-shots, and via the 'wall' screen-shot for the Facebook medium, which also included greetings between both parties. It is possible that such differences impact perceptions of language variety, in that the corporate medium is perceived as more formal and less natural than the social medium.

Findings for the other communication features reveal further notable differences. First, as anticipated, the personal focus and two-way communication features were rated significantly higher for Facebook versus the other two media, which is unsurprising given the social nature of this medium. Interestingly, we also found the website medium to be rated



higher on two-way communication than the YouTube video. Whilst participants were specifically asked to rate the medium they had just viewed, they may have nonetheless considered organisations' websites generally; for example, the live chat functions that are more common in retail companies (though these were not present in our website media content).

Even though we held the recruitment material content constant across the three media, participants' ratings of the amount of information was found to be lower with the website medium than with the video and Facebook medium. This may be attributable to the fact that text-based content that can be skim-read, whereas the viewer has no control over the speed at which the content is conveyed via video. However, whilst the mean amount of information score was higher for the YouTube video versus Facebook medium, this difference was not significant. A second explanation pertains to the other between-media richness differences. It is possible that judgments of the amount of information presented are linked to perceptions of the media richness features, which were ranked more highly across the Facebook and YouTube media.

As predicted, the Facebook source was perceived significantly more credible than the YouTube video and website source. As mentioned, this may be attributable to the 'open' nature of Facebook; job seekers may feel that organisations will not sanitise their recruitment message with misleading information as this could result in public dispute. However, our findings highlight the role of media richness in influencing source credibility. We found that sources are perceived as more credible when the media is perceived high in personal focus, multiple cues and amount of information. Of further interest, Facebook was positively related to personal focus, which in turn was positively related to source credibility. Thus, the capabilities of Facebook to provide tailored responses to job seekers has a positive impact on job seekers' perceptions of source credibility. The YouTube video however, showed a

positive link with multiple cues, which in turn was positively related to source credibility. Thus, the array of verbal and non-verbal cues present in organisation-created videos leads to heightened perceptions of source credibility. Finally, both Facebook and YouTube video were positively related to source credibility via amount of information, highlighting the importance of conveying enough detail to display the sources' trustworthiness, likeability and expertise.

Contrary to theory and prior research (Allen et al., 2004; Colarelli, 1984; Breaugh & Starke, 2000), two-way communication and language variety were not significantly related to source credibility, and consequently did not mediate the relationship between the media and source credibility as one may expect. We note the design of our study could be accountable for these insignificant findings. One could anticipate Facebook to drive judgments of two-way communication, in turn impacting source credibility. However, as participants were only able to visualise two-way communication via the Facebook's 'wall' rather than interact with the media, the outcomes may have aligned with prior research and compared with face-to-face contexts had participants been provided with the opportunity engage in true bi-directional communication. Language variety, on the other hand, may not have had a positive impact on source credibility perceptions due to the relatively formal nature of the recruitment message adopted for this present research.

In partial support of conceptual models of recruitment processes (Breaugh & Starke, 2000) we also identify that source credibility serves as a mechanism in the media richness-organisational attraction relationships, with regards to personal focus, multiple cues and amount of information. These features, therefore, are shown to heighten affective reactions towards the organisation via increasing perceptions of source liking, expertise, and trustworthiness. In line with MRT and attitude formation theory (Ajzen, 2001), it appears these three features are key in reducing ambiguity, increasing affective reactions, and

consequently the significance job seekers attach to information they receive. Signaling theory (Rynes, 1991; Spence, 1973), as discussed, could also explain why source credibility serves a central role in impacting organisational attraction; through association, positive organisational source characteristics may well indicate that wider organisational attributes are desirable.

It is worth highlighting that the significant indirect personal focus to organisational attraction finding (through source credibility) differs to that of Allen et al.'s (2004) research where only a direct personal focus-attraction link was identified. The measure of credibility adopted in this prior research focussed primarily on overall message credibility. Taken together, the discrepant findings suggest that message and source credibility are distinct elements of recruitment communication that are influenced by different factors.

### **Limitations**

A first limitation concerns the cross-sectional design, which introduces potential common method variance and restrictions in inferring causal relations among the study variables. As we manipulated the media presented to the three groups of participants (in the between subjects design) we can be confident that the differences in perceptions of media richness and source credibility are due to the different media conditions experienced. However, we need to recognise that the measurement of media richness, source credibility and organisational attractiveness variables occurred at a single point in time. The rationale for this was that we were examining organisational attraction in response to viewing each medium at that particular time, rather than the effects of each medium on job seekers' perceptions of the organisation at a later date. However, we note that it would be advantageous to incorporate time intervals between the focal antecedents, mediators and outcomes for us to have greater confidence in any causal processes that may be occurring.

Secondly, our study was based on a simulated recruitment context, whereby the job seekers comprised of students and graduates. This poses external validity issues; primarily, one may question whether our findings would hold in the field. However, previously published findings in this respect are mixed. On one hand, meta-analytic research has identified that applicant reactions tend to be stronger in hypothetical (versus authentic) settings (Hausknecht, Day, & Thomas, 2004), suggesting that observed effects are attenuated by heightened control in simulated studies. Conversely, other research has revealed evidence of recruitment effects on outcomes such as attraction and job acceptance in field settings, albeit there is a lack of evidence for these effects in laboratory settings that tend to utilise student samples (Chapman et al., 2005; Harris & Fink, 1987; Rynes & Miller, 1983). The motivation of genuine applicants (in the field) is said to be higher, resulting in stronger effect sizes than those partaking in simulated/laboratory studies (Truxillo, Bodner, Bertolino, Bauer, & Yonce, 2009). With regards to the present study, students are expected to have appropriate levels of motivation for viewing and truthfully rating the study stimuli as these participants are likely to be looking for graduate jobs (currently or in the near future). Moreover, as noted, our analyses revealed no significant differences on any of the study variables when comparing the student and graduate subgroups.

Furthermore, we note that our findings are limited to one representation of each medium; it would be desirable to conduct this study with multiple versions of the media. However, we believe that presenting a single version of each medium (which were representative of the majority of the organisations' media that we reviewed at the onset of this investigation) was sufficient in establishing between-media richness differences; from these media alone, participants should have accurately identified the presence of certain richness features (e.g., that the Facebook wall was showing conversations, and thus caters for two-way communication, and that the video encompasses a mix of verbal and nonverbal

cues). We recognise that some organisations may create more elaborate and complex versions of each medium (for instance, more imagery in their recruitment YouTube videos); however, as we needed to standardise the content across the three media to robustly investigate between-media differences (on media richness and source credibility), it was necessary to simplify the content shown via each medium in the present research.

Regarding examining source credibility, we note the limitation concerning our choice of video presenter. We recognise that a white, middle-class male may not appeal to all job seekers (albeit speakers with these characteristics are often found in the UK recruitment videos screened at the onset of this research) and could also indicate a non-diverse organisation, whereby detracting from the content of the recruitment message which attempted to proclaim otherwise. This could explain why the direct YouTube video-source credibility relationship was negative, but became significantly positive when mediated by certain media richness features. Ideally, the video element of the research needed multiple conditions, with presenters of different gender, ages, and ethnicities to test the validity of these outcomes.

### **Future research**

There are various avenues for future research. Most notably, investigations could focus on job seekers' perceptions of alternative forms of social media (e.g., LinkedIn and Twitter) in relation to Facebook, and non-social recruitment media. It is viable that besides communication features, source credibility is impacted by job seekers' judgements of the media per se; Facebook for instance, could be perceived as unsuitable for relaying recruitment information, versus LinkedIn, a professional social network, which could be considered more appropriate. Indeed, this may differ across populations; students and graduates may have a preference for informal social media, whilst senior employees seeking

alternative roles may prefer professional forms of media. Such preferences could differentially influence source credibility perceptions, and in turn organisational attraction.

Future research could also investigate the effectiveness of each medium at enabling applicants to accurately judge their level of fit with the organisation. As discussed, the literature proposes that richer media is more effective than leaner media at reducing uncertainties (Daft & Lengel, 1986); this would likely aid in person-organisation fit decisions. Research has yet to investigate this in relation to specific richness features. Based on our findings, it would be worthy to investigate whether richness features mediate the relationships between media and person-organisation fit judgements, and whether these mediations differ across various media.

### **Implications for organisations**

Our findings clearly indicate that the different media used can explain differences in potential applicants' perceptions of media richness, source credibility and ultimately ratings of organisational attraction. Considering this, our findings suggest that organisations should link and integrate different media, and particularly devote efforts into promoting their rich social and video media (for instance, from their corporate website, so that potential new recruits are enticed into viewing these media). Moreover, our findings suggest that organisations should infuse their web-based media with greater personalised focus, cues, and amount of information. As we found the video medium to drive multiple cues, and the social medium to drive personalised focus, it would be beneficial for organisations to combine both on a single platform; for instance, by embedding videos onto their Facebook profile (as noted above, the majority of the Facebook profiles we reviewed at the onset of this investigation do not include videos). Furthermore, organisations' websites would be enhanced with the addition of video and content of a personalised nature. Regarding the latter point,

organisations could integrate an instant message feature on their website, which would enable job seekers to obtain tailored responses to their queries.

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**Table 1. Testing the Media Richness Factor Structure: CFA Outcomes**

Model	$\chi^2$	$df$	$\chi^2/df$	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	TLI
Model 1: One-factor media richness (LV+MC+PF+TW)	811.20	77	10.54	0.17	0.12	0.77	0.73
Model 2: Four-factor media richness (LV, MC, PF, TW)	243.77	71	3.43	0.08	0.04	0.95	0.93
Model 3: Three-factor media richness (LV, MC, PF+TW)	322.78	74	4.36	0.10	0.05	0.92	0.90
Model 4: Three-factor media richness (MC, TW, LV+PF)	463.29	74	6.26	0.12	0.09	0.88	0.85
Model 5: Three-factor media richness (LV, TW, MC+PF)	642.61	74	8.68	0.15	0.11	0.82	0.78
Model 6: Three-factor media richness (PF, LV, TW+MC)	639.40	74	8.64	0.15	0.11	0.82	0.78
Model 7: Three-factor media richness (PF, TW, LV+MC)	345.54	74	4.67	0.10	0.10	0.92	0.90
Model 8: Three-factor media richness (PF, MC, TW+LV)	483.87	74	6.54	0.13	0.10	0.87	0.84
Model 9: Two-factor media richness (MC+LV, TW+PF)	423.09	76	5.57	0.12	0.10	0.89	0.87
Model 10: Two-factor media richness (MC+TW, LV+PF)	727.99	76	9.58	0.16	0.11	0.80	0.76
Model 11: Two-factor media richness (MC+PF, TW+LV)	743.18	76	9.78	0.16	0.12	0.79	0.75

*Note.* N=342. LV=language variety, MC=multiple cues, PF=personal focus, TW=two-way communication.

**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations**

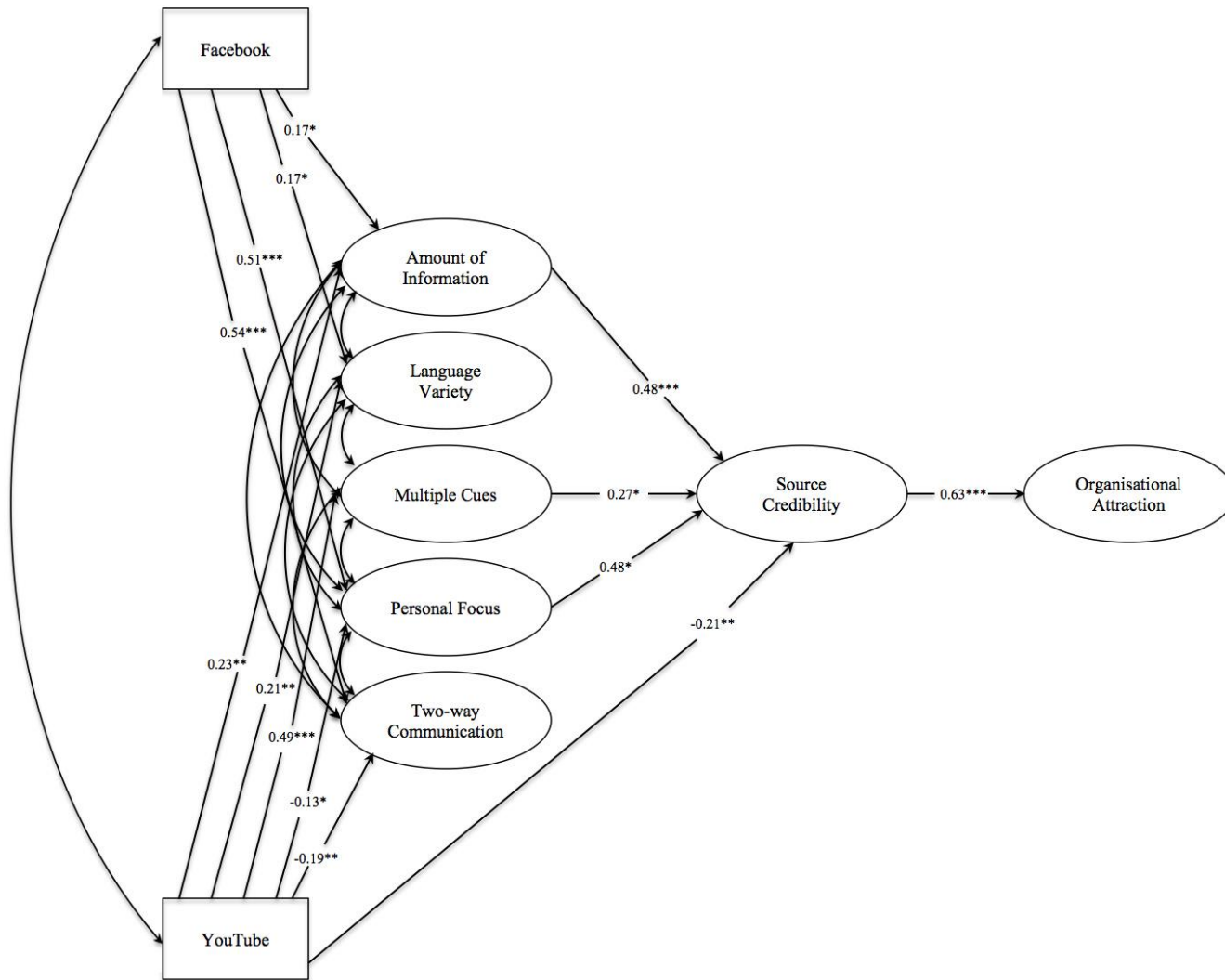
Variable/Media	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Language Variety	3.30	.97	(.68)								
2. Multiple Cues	2.50	1.12	.51***	(.84)							
3. Personal Focus	3.15	.95	.32***	-.02	(.89)						
4. Two-way Communication	3.04	1.03	.25***	-.08	.82***	(.92)					
5. Amount of Information	4.72	1.36	.18**	.20***	.18**	.11*	(.89)				
6. Source Credibility	4.29	1.10	.32***	.27***	.39***	.29***	.51***	(.91)			
7. Organisational Attraction	4.00	1.36	.29***	.26***	.33***	.25***	.38***	.66***	(.92)		
8. Facebook (N=123)	.36	.48	.06	-.22***	.54***	.61***	.05	.17**	.11*	-	
9. YouTube (N=107)	.31	.46	.08	.44***	-.36***	-.44***	.13*	-.08	-.05	-	-
10. Website (N=112)	.33	.47	-.15**	-.21***	-.20***	-.19**	-.18*	-.10	-.06	-	-

*Note.* N=342. Cronbach's alpha values ( $\alpha$ ) are provided in parentheses on the diagonal. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ . The media correlations should be interpreted as one medium versus the other two media dummy variables.

**Table 3. Mean Ratings of Media and Source Features by Media**

Media	Two-way communication	Personal focus	Multiple cues	Language variety	Amount of information	Source credibility
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
Facebook	3.87 (.64)	3.84 (.70)	2.17 (.89)	3.38 (.77)	4.81 (1.30)	4.54 (.91)
YouTube	2.36 (.90)	2.64 (.85)	3.23 (1.15)	3.42 (1.11)	4.99 (1.33)	4.17 (1.20)
Website	2.76 (.87)	2.88 (.84)	2.16 (.99)	3.09 (1.01)	4.37 (1.39)	4.12 (1.15)
	$F(2, 213.01) = 125.89, p < .001$	$F(2, 219.03) = 81.09, p < .001$	$F(2, 218.53) = 35.55, p < .001$	$F(2, 212.97) = 3.63, p < .05$	$F(2, 223.49) = 6.08, p < .01$	$F(2, 216.09) = 5.54, p < .01$

*Note.* Facebook N=123; YouTube N=107; Website N=112. All scale responses range from 1-5, except for amount of information and source credibility that range from 1-7.



**Figure 1. Partial-Mediation Model. Model fit statistics:  $\chi^2=779.15$ ,  $df=371$ , RMSEA=0.057, SRMR=0.040, CFI=0.942, TLI=0.932, AIC=26469.11 (\* $p<.05$ , \*\* $p<.01$ , \*\*\* $p<.001$ ).**

*Note.* The Facebook and YouTube media were compared against the website medium as a reference category.